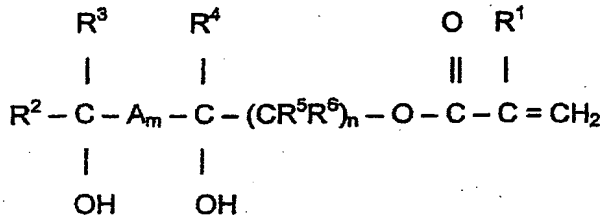
What is claimed is:

1. A process for preparing compounds of the formula I



(I)

where

R^1 = H or CH_3

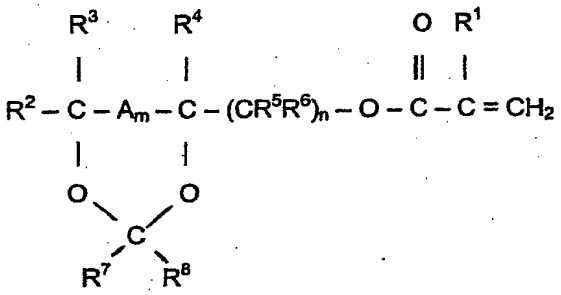
A = (CH_2) where m may assume the values of 0 or 1,

R^{2-6} = may be the same or different and assume the definitions of OH, H, aliphatic or aromatic hydrocarbon, for example methyl, ethyl, propyl, isopropyl, (etc.),

n may assume the values of 0, 1 or 2,

characterized in that

compounds of the formula II



(II)

where R^1, R^2, R^3, R^4, R^5, R^6, A, m and n are each as

defined above and R^7 and R^8 may be the same or different and may assume the definitions of methyl, ethyl or propyl are reacted with water in small amounts (ratio of compound (II) to water between 1:1 and 1:3) over an acidic ion exchanger in a fixed bed, and the resulting compound III

$$R^7R^8C = O \qquad \text{(III)}$$

is removed continuously from the reaction medium.

2. The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that stabilization against polymerization and discoloration is effected with tocopherol derivatives.

3. The process as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that stabilization is effected with tocopherol in an amount of 10 ppm - 1000 ppm based on the monomer mixture.

4. The use of the monomer mixture obtainable according to one of the preceding claims for producing contact lenses.

5. The use of the monomer mixture obtainable according to one of the preceding claims for producing water-soluble polymers.